Washington State Institute for Public Policy

Benefit-Cost Results

Brief Strategic Family Therapy (BSFT)

Benefit-cost estimates updated July 2015. Literature review updated April 2012.

Current estimates replace old estimates. Numbers will change over time as a result of model inputs and monetization methods.

The WSIPP benefit-cost analysis examines, on an apples-to-apples basis, the monetary value of programs or policies to determine whether the benefits from the program exceed its costs. WSIPP's research approach to identifying evidence-based programs and policies has three main steps. First, we determine "what works" (and what does not work) to improve outcomes using a statistical technique called meta-analysis. Second, we calculate whether the benefits of a program exceed its costs. Third, we estimate the risk of investing in a program by testing the sensitivity of our results. For more detail on our methods, see our technical documentation.

Program Description: This intervention is aimed at youth who are at risk of developing serious behavior problems, including delinquency and substance abuse. Because such risk can be defined in various ways, the studies in this analysis included participants with different types and severity of problems. This treatment has been extensively tested on ethnic minorities.

Benefit-Cost Summary

Program benefits	
Participants	$177
Taxpayers	$565
Other (1)	$737
Other (2)	$15
Total	$1,495
Costs	($536)
Benefits minus cost	$959

Summary statistics	
Benefit to cost ratio	$2.79
Benefits minus costs	$959
Probability of a positive net present value	68 %

The estimates shown are present value, life cycle benefits and costs. All dollars are expressed in the base year chosen for this analysis (2014). The economic discount rates and other relevant parameters are described in our technical documentation.

Detailed Monetary Benefit Estimates

Source of benefits	Benefits to: Participants	Taxpayers	Other (1)	Other (2)	Total benefits
From primary participant					
Crime	$0	$24	$67	$12	$103
Labor market earnings (illicit drug abuse/dependence)	$0	$0	$0	$0	$1
Health care (disruptive behavior disorder)	$176	$541	$669	$271	$1,657
Adjustment for deadweight cost of program	$0	$0	$0	($268)	($266)
Totals	$177	$565	$737	$15	$1,495

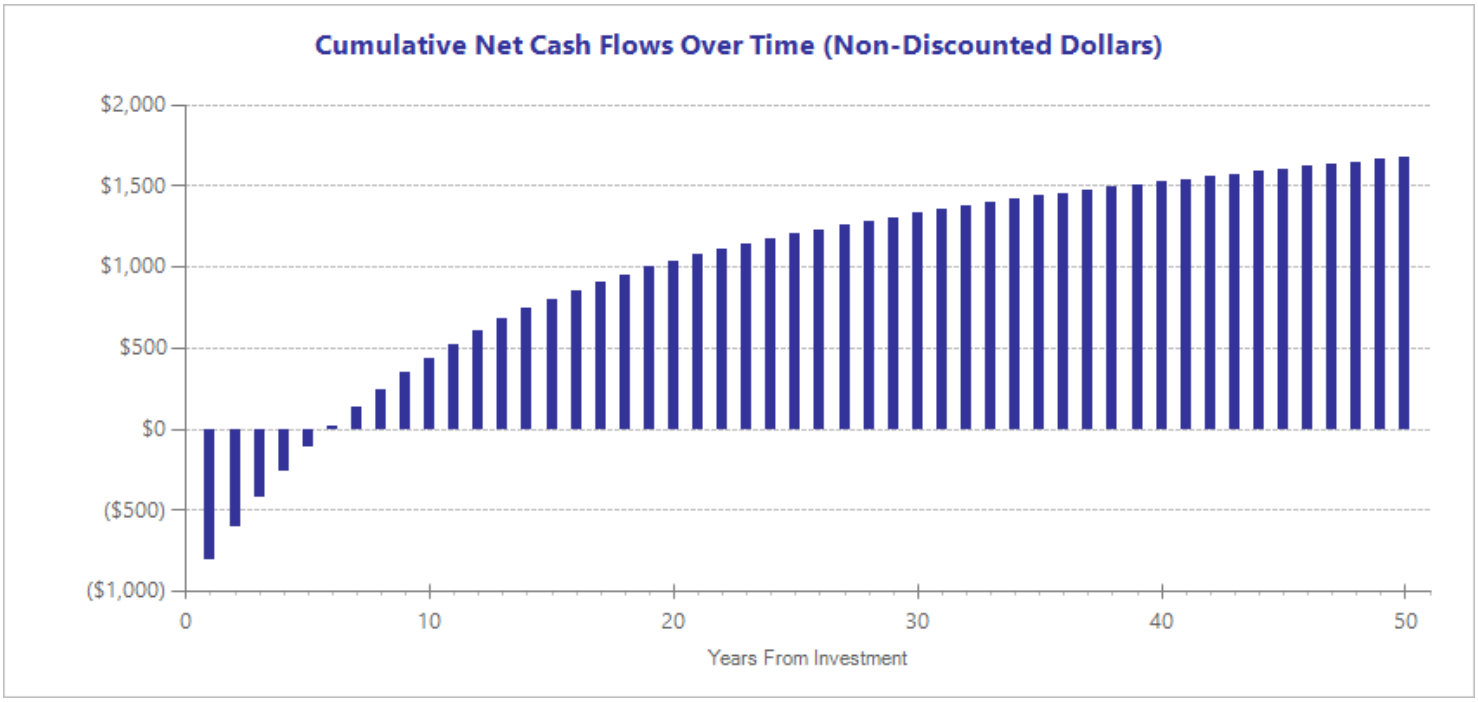
We created the two "other" categories to report results that do not fit neatly in the "participant" or "taxpayer" perspectives. In the "Other (1)" category we include the benefits of reductions in crime victimization, the economic spillover benefits of improvement in human capital outcomes, and the benefits from private or employer-paid health insurance. In the "Other (2)" category we include estimates of the net changes in the value of a statistical life and net changes in the deadweight costs of taxation.

Detailed Cost Estimates

	Annual cost	Program duration	Year dollars	Summary statistics	
Program costs	$1,350	1	2010	Present value of net program costs (in 2014 dollars)	($536)
Comparison costs	$850	1	2010	Uncertainty (+ or - %)	10 %

Based on therapist time, as reported in the treatment studies, as well as training costs and a flat fee for materials (e.g., manuals). Hourly therapist cost was based on the latest actuarial estimates of reimbursement by modality in WA State (DSHS).

The figures shown are estimates of the costs to implement programs in Washington. The comparison group costs reflect either no treatment or treatment as usual, depending on how effect sizes were calculated in the meta analysis. The uncertainty range is used in Monte Carlo risk analysis, described in our technical documentation.



Meta-Analysis of Program Effects

Outcomes measured	Primary or secondary participant	No. of effect sizes	Treatment N	Unadjusted effect size (random effects model)		Adjusted effect sizes and standard errors used in the benefit-cost analysis					
						First time ES is estimated			Second time ES is estimated		
				ES	p-value	ES	SE	Age	ES	SE	Age
Disruptive behavior disorder symptoms	Primary	3	124	-0.500	0.002	-0.205	0.148	14	-0.119	0.092	17
Illicit drug abuse or dependence	Primary	2	301	-0.086	0.404	-0.087	0.013	13	0.000	0.187	16

Citations Used in the Meta-Analysis

Coatsworth, J. D., Santisteban, D. A., McBride, C. K, Szapocznik, J. (2001). Brief strategic family therapy versus community control: Engagement, retention, and an exploration of the moderating role of adolescent symptom severity. *Family Process, 40*(3), 313-313

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Santisteban, D. A., Coatsworth, J. D., Perez-Vidal, A., Kurtines, W. M., Schwartz, S. J., LaPerriere, A., & Szapocznik, J. (2003). Efficacy of brief strategic family therapy in modifying Hispanic adolescent behavior problems and substance use. *Journal of Family Psychology, 17*(1), 121-133.

Szapocznik, J., Rio, A., Murray, E., Cohen, R., Scopetta, M., Rivas-Vasquez, A., . . . Kurtines, W. (1989). Structural family versus psychodynamic child therapy for problematic Hispanic boys. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 57*(5), 571-578.

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Washington State Institute for Public Policy

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